

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 817

INFO ALL OAS CAPITALS 002

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 2944

USDEL 006

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCON, OAS

SUBJECT: SAN JOSE CONFERENCE

1. CUBA WAS STILL FRONT AND CENTER JULY 16, THOUGH WITH THE FORMAL OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE DELEGATES BEGAN TO SETTLE DOWN TO THE WORDADAY BUSINESS OF AMENDING THE RIO TREATY.

2. THE IDEA THAT THE 14 VOTES REQUIRED TO APPROVE A FREEDOM OF ACTION FORMULA IS PROBABLY AVAILABLE HAS BEGUN TO SINK HOME TO SOME OF THE RELUCTANT DELEGATIONS. AMBASSADOR CASTILLO ARRIOLA APPROACHED US TO SAY THAT GUATEMALA IS NOT YET PREPARED TO VOTE FOR FREEDOM OF ACTION AT SAN JOSE, BUT WOULD SUPPORT IT IF A SEPARATE CONFERENCE WERE TO BE HELD TEN DAYS OR TWO WEEKS AFTER THE CLOSE OF THIS CONFERENCE. CASTILLO'S ARGUMENT WAS THAT IF WE SHOULD MOVE DIRECTLY FROM AMENDMENT OF THE RIO TREATY TO THE CUBA QUESTION HERE, IT WOULD DETRACT FROM THE IMPORTANT WORK DONE ON RIO TREATY REFORM AND INDEED WOULD LEAD TO INTERPRETATIONS THAT THE WHOLE REFORM EFFORT HAD BEEN A COVER TO DEAL WITH THE CUBA PROBLEM. CASTILLO SAID HE HAD TALKED WITH BOLIVIAN AMBASSADOR

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SANZ AND BELIEVED THAT BOLIVIA WOULD FOLLOW GUATEMALA'S

LEAD ON SUPPORTING A FREEDOM OF ACTION FORMULA AT A LATER DATE.

3. WE PROMISED TO TRANSMIT GUATEMALA'S VIEWS TO WASHINGTON. DE LA COLINA OF MEXICO, WHO IS STILL THE QUARTERBACK ON THIS MATTER, SAID THAT HE WAS RECEPTIVE TO GUATEMALA'S APPEAL, SINCE HE WAS DESIROUS OF GETTING AS LARGE A MAJORITY AS POSSIBLE FOR HIS INITIATIVE, AND A FEW DAYS WOULD HARDLY MATTER. HE SUGGESTED TRINIDAD AS A GOOD PLACE TO HOLD A MEETING SOMETIME IN AUGUST. HE SAID, HOWEVER, AND WE AGREED, THAT NOTHING SHOULD BE DONE ON THIS WITHOUT THE APPROVAL OF FACIO, WHOSE VIEWS WE DO NOT YET HAVE. THE CHIEFS OF THE COLOMBIAN AND VENEZUELAN DELEGATION HAVE TOLD US THEY DO NOT LIKE GUATEMALA'S PLOY.

4. THE CONFERENCE PROPER GOT OFF TO A GOOD START WITH THE ELECTION OF FACIO AS CHAIRMAN AND THE DECISION TO GET RIGHT DOWN TO BUSINESS. NICARAGUA TRIED TO CHANGE THE RULES APPROVED BY THE PERMANENT COUNCIL SO THAT THIS CONFERENCE COULD APPROVE AMENDMENTS ONLY BY TWO-THIRDS VOTE BUT THE MAJORITY-VOTE FORMULA WON WITH ONLY FIVE VOTES OPPOSED (U.S. INCLUDED). RATIFICATION WILL REQUIRE TWO-THIRDS OF ALL MEMBERS.

5. THE SPEECHES AT THE FORMAL OPENING SESSION BY FACIO, ORFILA, ODUBER AND VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR MACHIN WERE UNEXCEPTIONABLE. ODUBER'S WAS THE MOST INTERESTING. HE MADE AN IMPRESSIVE APPEAL FOR A STRONG TREATY, SAYING THAT ONLY THE PROTECTION PROVIDED BY THE TREATY MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR COSTA RICA TO DISPENSE WITH AN ARMY. HE MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY (PERHAPS TO THE DISCOMFITURE OF SOME PRESENT) PAST INCURSIONS BY COSTA RICA'S NEIGHBORS, IN WHICH THE TREATY HAD COME TO THE RESCUE.

6. THE AFTERNOON SESSION WAS TAKEN UP WITH A DISCUSSION OF ARTICLE 2 OF THE RIO TREATY. THE U.S. SOUGHT TO RETAIN THE SPECIFIC INJUNCTION THAT AN EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO RESOLVE DISPUTES IN THE HEMISPHERE BEFORE TAKING THEM TO THE UN. THIS VIEW GOT SOME SUPPORT (BRAZIL, CHILE, CONFIDENTIAL

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NICARAGUA, EL SALVADOR, URUGUAY, PARAGUAY). WE HAVE HELD A MEETING WITH BRAZIL, CHILE AND EL SALVADOR IN ORDER TO PRESENT A UNITED FRONT AT THURSDAY MEETING, THOUGH OUR CHANCE OF WINNING ON THIS ISSUE IS NOT GOOD.
TODMAN

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